

MY THREE YEARS WORKING FOR
MICHAEL JACKSON

DEC 1990-DEC 1993



Robert W. Wegner

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INTRODUCTION

It all began in December of 1990. I was working for a security company in the Los Angeles area that provided personal security for very influential people and many movie stars. One of my coworkers was going to work for Michael Jackson's security department at his ranch in the Santa Barbara area as a lieutenant. He asked me if I would like to interview for the position of sergeant. He knew I liked to work with kids and just about every weekend there would be a large group of children at the ranch. I agreed to the interview and the rest of the story is as follows.

— Robert W. Wegner

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SETTLING INTO SECURITY

On December 10, 1990, I began my employment as a sergeant in the security force at Neverland Valley Ranch. The first day was simply an orientation day, during which I was given a tour. Neverland Valley Ranch consisted of the Main House, the Business Office, the Movie Theater, the Hill House (which contained all of Michael Jackson's costumes he had worn during his concerts), the Animal Compound, the Amusement Park, and the Indian Village. My first impression was that Neverland Valley Ranch was a beautiful estate, and I likened it to paradise. However, I soon learned that the estate had its fair share of problems.

I had been assigned to the graveyard shift (midnight to 8 a.m.) for the first six months as this was the most problematic and in need of strong guidance. When I reported to work the next day, a short, obese female sergeant greeted me and introduced the other security officers. I was then taken for another tour of the property, this one focusing on those areas that were vulnerable to trespassing, as the graveyard shift was the most opportune time for trespassers. I was told that a young woman had once made it onto the property and hid out for three full days before she was discovered by the security force.

As I researched the problems facing the graveyard shift, I was quite surprised to learn that most of the security officers were afraid of the dark. Several also felt that there were evil spirits and ghosts living on the ranch. Personally, I don't believe in ghosts or spirits, but over the three years I worked there I too felt an undercurrent of evil. I can't describe it; it was just something I felt.

Despite their fears, the security officers were open to the structure and organization I brought to the force.

I gave a roll-call and read the daily log and the reports of the activities that had occurred over the previous several days. Then I assigned duties to the officers for the shift. One patrol shift consisted of walking a beat around the main house. The other consisted of driving a security vehicle around the property. The shift was structured so that each officer was assigned a relief officer who would take over during meal and break times.

I used a security vehicle to take my own tour of the ranch. The ranch was huge; it took me almost two hours to drive the areas that were drivable. I drove along the fence line to make sure it was intact. I also went into the back country where the vegetation was very thick.

I don't recall any unusual occurrences that first night. However, I did see a one-eyed raccoon in the tree

next to our security office. When I asked about it, I was told that the raccoon had been in a fight with another raccoon. Mister One Eye (as the security officers called him) had fought for his right to be in that tree. The raccoons, although amusing, were an annoyance at times. On a separate occasion, Michael called me at approximately 2:00 in the morning because he had heard noises on the roof over his bedroom. I assured him that it was probably a raccoon walking around. Even so, he said that he was scared and wanted a security officer to sit outside his bedroom all night. So, I assigned my relief officer to spend most of the night outside Michael's bedroom door. When the officer arrived at Michael's bedroom door, he knocked on the door to let Michael know he was there. I relieved him for about fifteen minutes every hour.

All in all, the majority of my tour of duty during that first six months was relatively quiet, though we did have the usual number of trespassers to deal with.

In fact, it was rain, not a security issue, that caused the biggest problem during that time. One night, the rain came down so hard that areas of the ranch began flooding. The small railroad tracks along the property were in danger of being washed away. I helped the firefighter on duty try to save the tracks. In the worst areas, we had to dig up the tracks and make a culvert so the water would flow under and away from the tracks. I was in water up to my waist and was being pushed around by the heavy currents. There had been

a drought during the previous few years, and all the debris rushed down with the water. We managed to save the tracks though.

In addition to rain, we also once battled fire. A huge fire roared right next to boundary line of the ranch. The Santa Barbara Fire Department used helicopters to scoop water from the lakes on the ranch to control the fire. The fire spread and came as close as ten feet from the ranch. People were inhaling a lot of smoke and finding it very hard to breath. We put wet towels over our noses and mouths to act as filtering system. We were finally able to get most of the employees off the ranch. All in all we were very lucky; the Santa Barbara County Fire Department was able to keep the fire from coming onto the ranch.

A TOUR OF NEVERLAND VALLEY RANCH

Neverland Valley Ranch was located at 5225 Figueroa Mountain Road, Los Olivos, California 93441, approximately 300 miles north of Los Angeles and about fifteen miles from the small Danish town of Solvang, where I had an apartment, the front gate was approximately nine-tenths of a mile from the front door of Michael's mansion. Proceeding toward the mansion from the front gate, there was a Y in the road. To the right was a dirt road called Quail Valley Road, which led to the back of the ranch. To the left was a paved road that turned into a rock and cement

road, which was the circular driveway leading to the front door of the mansion.

When facing the house, to the left were smaller buildings and an alcove. These buildings housed Michael's office, the garages, and the security office. Above Michael's office was a small gym and workout room.

Around the house to the left was a massive backyard. There was a swimming pool and a recreation hall, containing numerous arcade and video games. Near the center of the backyard was a gazebo. The entire backyard was covered with a very green and lush lawn. Next to the recreation hall was a sunken tennis court, with between six and eight stairs leading down to it.

On the right side of the house was a small gauge railroad. It ran from the back of the ranch, past the main house to an area that had a turnaround, so the train could make a return trip back to the train barn. This was where the train was housed every night.

Approximately fifty yards northwest of the main house on a raised area was the Business Office. The road past the Business Office led to the Hill House. This building, (besides being a residence) was where Michael kept all his costumes, jewelry, and mementos. The same road, going in the opposite direction, went past the main house to the Amusement Park, which had rides and entertainment, mainly for the children

visitors.

Directly across from the Amusement Park was the Movie Theater. The inside of the theater was very ornate, and the chairs reclined. There were two built-in private rooms, each with a large glass window for viewing and drapes for privacy. In these two rooms were beds, chairs, and other small pieces of furniture. Sometimes Michael took children into one of the rooms and closed the curtains.

Further along the road, past the park area, is the Animal Compound, Michael's own zoo. It's filled with various animals from all over the world. Several outdoor pens were used to house some of the animals.

Within the pens were small structures where the animals could go to get out of bad weather.

Continuing on along the road is the train barn mentioned earlier. A year or so after I began working for Michael, he had a full-size train shipped to the ranch. The tracks for this train were laid parallel to those for the smaller train. However, one of the curves was too sharp for the train to maneuver. So, the workers had to tear up some of the track and relay it at an appropriate angle. This time it worked.

For Michael's enjoyment, he had outside speakers placed all around the house and in various other locations. There were two lakes on the ranch, each

very close to the main house: an upper lake and a lower lake, which was the largest. Near the lower lake were four connected guestrooms. The four guest units were very lush with quite a few amenities.

SAFETY CONCERNS

The State of California mandated a safety program. The ranch manager asked me if I knew anything about setting up a such a program. I told him that I had implemented safety programs in the past and that I would be able to do the same at the ranch. He told me that we had only six months to get the program up and running. I was immediately assigned to set up a safety program, while continuing part-time as a security sergeant. I told the ranch manager that the assignment was acceptable to me, but there was a strong possibility I would not be able to implement the safety program within the six-month time frame. He told me to do the best I could and that he would try to get another person to take over my duties in the security department. Fortunately, the ranch manager kept his word and was able to assign me full-time to work on the safety program.

I wrote the program within a few months and showed it to the ranch manager. He thought the program looked great. He called our workers ' compensation representative to see if it met the guidelines set forth by California's Occupational Safety & Health Administration (Cal / OSHA). The representative was

overwhelmed by the thoroughness of the program.

The next step was to form a safety committee, which would have a president, vice president, and so on down the line. I chose an employee from each department to serve as part of the nucleus of our base foundation. We then wrote the bylaws to serve as the rules and regulations and as a guide for any future problems that may arise.

It was determined that the safety committee would have a meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 2:00 p.m. At the first meeting, two person teams were formed and designated a particular month.

During their month, they were to cover certain sections of the ranch, fill out a report, and present their findings at the next meeting.

A form had been developed for the program, and there were also boxes and sections for the teams to use to make the job a little easier. It was soon discovered that there were many areas of concern throughout the ranch. One of the major safety concerns was in the landscaping department. When it was time to prune and trim the very tall trees (approximately 75 to 100 feet), the workers used the tallest ladder they had. Two of the employees would hold and balance the ladder while the trimmer would climb up and trim the tree. Obviously, this was a very dangerous undertaking.

I wrote up our official report citing the safety violation and presented it to the management team. I was told they would look into the matter and get back to me with their decision. It took them three months to finally respond. Their decision was to hold off a while so they could decide how to resolve the problem. I told them there was only one way it could be resolved; they would have to purchase a cherry picker to satisfy Cal / OSHA. A cherry picker is a crane with a basket on the end. The crane lifts the trimmer up to the highest area of the tree, with relatively no danger to the employee.

It was approximately six months before the cherry picker was purchased. I was told that the delay was in getting the money to buy it. It seemed as though anytime something was submitted, there was always a problem in getting the money. Michael had approximately 100 employees. There was the landscape department, maintenance department, fire department, housekeeping department, and security department. I started to wonder who was doing the budget for the ranch. It seemed so foolish to try to save money when there was the possibility that any one of those employees could be hurt or killed by not having the right equipment to do the job. And all the begging I did was for naught.

Another major concern was the Amusement Park; several of the rides were not maintained appropriately for all the use they were getting. During the good weather months, Michael would have young children -

mostly inner city kids and other youth groups -- out on most weekends. I reported the lack of maintenance to the management team. However, they told me it was none of my concern; I was talking to deaf ears. They told me that the year's budget was not large enough and that maintenance and repairs would have to wait until following year, even though there were still eight months left of the year. I told them that if there were an accident, the problem could be brought to the attention of Cal / OSHA. Cal OSHA would probably levy stiff financial fines and the repairs would have to be made. I also stressed that once Cal / OSHA was called out to the ranch, they would keep a very close eye on Neverland Valley Ranch in the future. Regardless, the management team did not budge from their position on the matter. We were lucky; we had only one minor accident on the Bumper Car Ride. I imagine that the proper safety repairs have still not been done to this day. It seemed as though the repairs would only be made if there were an accident and someone got hurt.

There were approximately six or seven rides that needed maintenance work. Most of the children liked the Spider Ride best. It was one of the rides that needed attention because it got so much use. Fortunately, no one was ever hurt on that ride. The ride that did have a number of injuries was the Bumper Car Ride. A child could hit another car with such force that it would almost knock the child out of the car. There was also the Tree House in the amusement area. Children were constantly falling out of the Tree House. Fortunately, the Tree House wasn't

very far from the ground.

THE ANIMAL COMPOUND

There were several animals in Michael's zoo: an elephant, a lion, monkeys of different species, and several other exotic animals from different countries. It came to my attention from a very reliable source that a good number of Michael's animals had been brought into the United States without the proper paperwork and / or shots and quarantines.

One day I saw them delivering a special animal by truck. As the truck drove down the road toward the fenced areas, the animal inside the back of the enclosed bed kicked and banged with all its force. When they got to the designated area, it was all the men could do to get the animal out of the truck. Once they finally got the animal out, they sedated it. Several minutes later, the animal calmed down and went to sleep. I found out that the animal, which was a cross between a zebra and a donkey, also came into the country illegally.

The following day, I went out to see how the new animal was doing. When I arrived, there were several employees standing outside of the fence watching as the animal continually banged its head against one of the fence posts. I immediately got on my radio to get qualified people out to the area to help the animal.

But by the time they arrived, the animal was dead. I had told management that there should be around - the - clock qualified personnel watching the animal so it wouldn't harm itself, but they had ignored my suggestion. Within a very short time, the dead animal was removed from the ranch. Once it was gone , there wasn't any evidence that the animal had ever existed.

The security department was getting complaints that someone was throwing rocks at the lion. The lion was heard roaring at different times of the day. His ddcage was approximately 500 yards from the main house. We put out special patrols to check the lion's cage at increased intervals to determine who was at fault. We got a report back that someone had seen Michael throwing medium-sized rocks at the lion. Apparently, he liked to hear the lion roar. Naturally, after that the special patrol was terminated.

Michael had a special building erected that housed his boa constrictor and various poisonous snakes. Security had to take an eight-hour class on the proper procedure for handling snake bites, and we had to keep certain antidotes on the ranch. But there wasn't an antidote for the boa constrictor; once the boa constrictor locked a grip on someone, there was no way of making it let loose. We would have had to take that person to the nearest hospital for emergency treatment.

Michael also had two giraffes. His favorite one was named Jabar. They were beautiful animals, but people

had to be careful around them. They had very hard heads that could have done a lot of damage to someone.

The chimpanzees looked lovable, but also could be dangerous. They could become very attached to a particular person, and if they thought that person was in harm's way, they would attack. One might wonder what harm a little monkey could do. The chimpanzees were very quick, very strong, and had a crushing grip. I found out firsthand. One of the employees took a baby chimpanzee home each night. It didn't have a mother, so she was its substitute mother. I was in the main office one day when she brought in the chimpanzee, holding it in her arins. I moved closer to say hello, and the chimpanzee must have thought I was going to hurt the woman. It almost got me, but the woman was able to hang onto it. I immediately left the office. I knew I could probably defend myself I, but I wasn't going to find out . I didn't want the monkey or myself to get hurt. From that day on I did the best I could to stay away from that monkey. However, I walked into the office one day, and the chimpanzee was there and went wild when it saw me. I turned right around and left.

ELIZABETH TAYLOR

In October of 1991, Elizabeth Taylor was married to Larry Fortensky. The wedding took place at Neverland

Valley Ranch. The preparations were lavish. The planning started several months prior to the wedding. It was to take place in the early evening in the gazebo in the backyard.

As soon as the word got out about the wedding, hoards of people started gathering at the front gate to the ranch. When the date of the wedding was announced, even more people came. They were all hoping to get a glimpse of Elizabeth Taylor or Michael Jackson. The security for the wedding was very prodigious and complete, if not a little over done. Elizabeth even had her own security force to protect her and her husband - to - be.

On the day of the wedding, everyone involved in the security aspect of the wedding met in a hotel convention room, located in Los Olivos, approximately ten to twelve miles from Neverland Valley Ranch. Those working for Elizabeth Taylor were given their individual assignments. My assignment was to be Michael's personal bodyguard because of my expertise in this area. When I left the security briefing, I drove to Solvang to pick up my tuxedo as I was to be part of the wedding party guarding Michael.

There were hundreds of people outside of the front gate, all hoping to see a celebrity. The news media had their crews set up at and around the front gate to get coverage of anything they felt was newsworthy in the backyard, security had large balloons flying overhead on heavy twine, to discourage helicopters

from trying to fly low over the estate. There were approximately twelve balloons. When the helicopters started arriving, the noise level was tremendous.

Michael escorted Elizabeth from the back door of the main house up a stone walkway that led to the gazebo. Elizabeth was beautiful in her wedding gown. She had her arm entwined with Michael's as they proceeded toward the gazebo. Once there, the wedding began. The helicopters were so loud; no one in the wedding party could hear the nuptials.

During the nuptials, a parachutist landed about thirty feet from the gazebo. Immediately, security arrived and took the person into custody. He was quickly led out of the area, and the wedding continued. People have asked me why I didn't help subdue this person, and I have told them my job was to protect Michael. After the wedding, the parachutist was handed over to the local authorities. The camera that he had attached to the top of his helmet had malfunctioned, so his attempt at a scoop was a failure. Upon checking out the camera, we ascertained that it had been reported stolen somewhere in the San Diego area.

As the wedding progressed, one of the helicopters came in too low to try to get a better view, and it sucked one of the balloons into its intake manifold. The pilot finally regained control, but came within several feet of crashing. Later on it was determined that this pilot was flying on a revoked license. In the flying industry, he was considered a "rogue" and a

very dangerous pilot.

After the wedding, everyone moved slowly to the enormous tent in the backyard where the reception took place. It was my job to keep in close contact with Michael and not let him out of my sight. There were approximately 100 people at the reception. Michael and Elizabeth stayed for about an hour and then decided to see more of the ranch. They got on an electric cart that seated six people. Besides Michael and Elizabeth, the passengers were Elizabeth's security people. I stood there with my hands in my pockets thinking of a way to catch up to Michael. I saw a two - passenger cart and jumped into it to chase after Michael. I caught up with them around the Amusement Park. They visited the park for a short time and then moved on to see more of the ranch. For the next hour or so I followed Michael and Elizabeth around the ranch.

Finally, they headed back to the reception area. Everyone was just beginning to leave. About an hour later, everyone had left the ranch. What was once a busy event was now a subdued stillness, with only the sounds of nature to break the silence. It was a clear night and the stars were shining brightly in the heavens. I was exhausted; I had put in a sixteen hour day. I was eager to get home and crash.

Approximately two or three months after Elizabeth Taylor was married, she made another trip to Neverland Valley Ranch. I was instructed to meet her

at the heli-pad near the Amusement Park as she was arriving by helicopter. I was then to escort her to the main house . I took the electric cart and met her at the heli-pad. Elizabeth was dressed as a gypsy. I commented on how nice she looked. She was very gracious and thanked me for the compliment. Then I told her that we both graduated from the same high school . Her only comment was, " You graduated before me. " I told her that she graduated two or three years before me.

She had arranged to have an elephant delivered sometime before her arrival to the ranch. When we reached the side of the main house, the elephant was already there. It was an older elephant, approximately twenty plus years. The elephant's name was Gypsy. Someone went and found Michael and told him he was needed at the security office. When Michael rounded the corner of the security office, he saw the elephant. His first reaction was one of great surprise. He moved very cautiously towards the elephant. A specialist, who was hired to train and care for the elephant, was present. Michael moved closer to the elephant so that he could touch it.

BROKEN PROMISES

In 1991, MJJ Productions organized Family Day for the employees at the ranch. Each employee was allowed to bring two guests to the catered affair.

Everyone was excited about Family Day. The children were looking forward to seeing and meeting Michael. Although everyone had a good time, the day was not a great success. As the day wore on, everyone began to wonder where Michael was. Finally near the end of the day, we were told that Michael wasn't going to be there. No reason was given. There were a lot of disappointed people that day - another broken promise by Michael Jackson. He cared only about himself, not his employees. Needless to say, many employees expressed their disappointment. They had to try to explain to their children why Michael hadn't come to the outing, which was made even more difficult by the fact they weren't given a reason.

This was very typical for Michael Jackson. He was very inconsiderate when it came to keeping his word. He felt he could do anything he wanted to and didn't have to answer to anyone.

During those three years, Michael was supposed to do a special for one of the television stations. He went on the air to inform the public that he had hurt his ankle while practicing a dance segment. He appeared on crutches to bolster his claim about hurting his ankle. That same day at the ranch, he was walking without any need for the crutches and wasn't even limping.

Every year, the employees each received a turkey for Christmas. It was something that each employee looked forward to. In November of 1991, a memo

came from the corporate office stating that the year had been a lean one for Michael, so there wouldn't be any turkeys this year. The employees were very unhappy about the situation. No one could understand how someone like Michael Jackson could have such a bad year that he couldn't afford a turkey for each family. This was yet another broken promise by Michael.

MY PROMOTION

In August 1992, I was promoted to Chief of Security at the ranch. The former chief was leaving for personal reasons. There was a lieutenant in the security department that wanted the chief's job in the worst way. When I received the promotion, he was livid. He swore he would get even for being overlooked. As it turned out, I was forced to terminate the lieutenant for not following the rules and regulations of the security department and the ranch. He had authorized some people to come onto the ranch even though he didn't have the authority to do so; the only persons authorized were the administrator I, ranch manager, and the security chief.

THE OPRAH INTERVIEW

Michael told me that Oprah was visiting the ranch to conduct an interview to be aired live. He instructed me to prepare a security plan for the occasion. I did an in - depth investigation to determine what manpower would be needed. Once I had the plan worked out, I presented it to Michael. He was pleased with the plan, but I didn't receive any thanks for my hard work. However, I really didn't expect it.

Within the next few days, studio trucks and vans appeared at the front gate. One of these trucks was a big semi. The roads on the ranch, were not constructed to handle that much weight. As the trucks moved up the road to the main house, their wheels dug up the road. The weight was just too much for the road.

Once at the main house area, they began unloading and running their cables to the house. It took the crew most of the day to get ready for the interview.

The interview took place the following evening. The ranch was a madhouse with everyone running from here to there in preparation. Finally, Oprah sat down and began the interview. About a half-hour into the interview, the smoke alarm went off. You could hear it all the way out to the trucks. Michael was livid, and Oprah announced that they would take a station break.

The stage lamps had gotten so hot that they caused

that smoke alarm to activate. The crew quickly solved the problem, and the rest of the interview progressed without any further distractions.

When the interview at the house was over, Michael and Oprah drove down to the Amusement Park. From there they went into the theatre, and Michael did some of his dance routines while Oprah continued her interview.

A few days after the interview, I received a letter from Oprah thanking my security staff and me for a job well done. She was impressed with how well everything went.

OBSERVING MICHAEL WITH CHILDREN

I first had suspicions about children sleeping in Michael's bedroom — which had only one bed during my stint on the graveyard shift. The fire department on Neverland Valley Ranch required us to keep a chalkboard in the security office outlining all the sleeping arrangements on the ranch. Names were not given on the chalkboard, just the number of people in each room. During that six month period, I noticed ten to twenty children sleeping in Michael's bedroom.

Because I felt there was something wrong with these

sleeping arrangements, I began monitoring the number of times children slept in Michael's bedroom. I estimated that 100 children slept in Michael's bedroom during the three years I worked there.

When I left the graveyard shift, I began watching Michael anytime there were children visitors. It appeared that he always stood close to them, so their bodies would make contact.

One time there were several children in the backyard having a water balloon fight. Michael joined in and threw balloons at the children. Then he would run up to the child he just hit with a balloon and get down on his knees and hug that child. This kind of surprised me, because he always kept his personal space around adults.

When Michael rode around on one of his electrical carts with a child passenger, he often sat in such a way that he touched the child with his leg. And when he took a child to his amusement park, he would always sit as close to the child as he could.

Once when Michael was out with a male child, they went into the recreation building (at the rear of the main house) where all the video games were. As I waited for them to come out, I was getting concerned because of the length of time in the recreation building. I went to a side door and looked through the glass portion of the door. The child had his back to me playing a video game. Michael approached the child

from the rear and made full body contact with the boy and Michael placed his hands on the boy's shoulders. This really concerned me and I backed away from the door and continued to wait for them to leave the building.

One day I observed Michael talking to Jordy by the garage area. I was at a distance from them and could not hear what was being said. When all of the sudden Jordy yelled at Michael, " get the **** away from me. " Then Jordy walked away very fast from Michael. I remember the words exactly because it surprised me to hear a boy talk to Michael that way.

This outburst by Jordy happened on more than one occasion.

I also observed the same type of behavior by Macaulay Culkin towards Michael.

Another time when Michael took a male child with him on the electrical cart, (once again sitting close enough to touch the boy's thigh) to go to the theater, I continued to follow him. Once they were in the theater, they spent a good hour. This also, concerned me. There wasn't any movies being played, no projectionist present and it wouldn't have taken more than fifteen minutes to conduct a tour of the building. I wondered just what went on for that hour.

When Michael went to the amusement park with any of the male children, he would always sit in the same

seat with the boy. Sometimes it was a very tight fit, because the seat was designed for one person.

These observations were not a one-time event. They happened every time he went to the park with male children.

As I reflect on my three years at Neverland Valley Ranch, I still have a lot of unanswered concerns. I can't recall ever knowing a normal male adult that slept with male children. The answer Michael has given about being cute and innocent just doesn't ring true. Once a person is caught in a lie, how can any average person believe him about other important matters? When Michael said his nose had only been worked on two times, I knew that wasn't true. I saw his plastic surgeon with his black bag come out to the ranch at least twenty-five or more times in my three year tenure at the ranch. After each time Michael was wearing a surgical mask to cover his nose.

I kept careful observation because I suspected Michael was doing something wrong. The touching was done so casually that the average person would have never noticed it. However, my many years in law enforcement had taught me how to observe things that the average person would never see.

At one point, I gave Michael the benefit of doubt. I thought that perhaps he was doing nothing wrong and that he was just using poor judgment when it came to having those children sleep with him in his bedroom.

However, my observations were too significant to ignore.

I continued to watch Michael around the children until the Los Angeles Police Department acted on a complaint of child molestation from a child's family.

THE SEARCH WARRANT

It was a Saturday, and I was at the mall in Santa Maria, when my beeper went off. I called the ranch, and one of my lieutenants informed me that the Los Angeles Police Department and the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department had just arrived with a warrant to search the ranch. Naturally, I left for the ranch immediately.

When I arrived, officers were trying to get into Michael's bedroom. But the door was locked, and no one at the ranch had a key. Only Michael and the maid who cleaned the bedroom had a key. Michael was out of town and the maid was not on the premises. So, the Los Angeles Police Department called a local locksmith to come and open the door.

As we waited, the police officer in charge of serving the warrant introduced himself and gave me a copy of the search warrant. He told me that this case was a very sensitive one and whatever they found would be

put into a concealed file, so the press would not be able to report any of the facts. I laughed under my breath. In my opinion, the Los Angeles Police Department was not capable of keeping anything a secret. The locksmith finally arrived and opened the door.

Approximately eight to ten police officers searched the bedroom. One officer was a woman who kept commenting on the fact that all the door hinges and doorknobs were made of solid brass. For some reason she was amazed by this. The officers looked in every file cabinet, dresser drawer, and closet, as well as the secret room. They collected books and other reading materials they felt could be used as evidence. While these officers were searching Michael's bedroom, another group of officers searched the other buildings on the property.

After a few hours they concluded their search, wrapped things up, and departed. Before the Los Angeles Police Department had even left the premises, the news media were covering the story about the search warrant.

The ranch was run by an administrator from the corporate offices of MJJ Productions. She made monthly inspection visits to the ranch to ascertain whether everyone was doing their jobs correctly. Following these visits, she would have a meeting with the ranch manager to make any changes she deemed necessary. After the search warrant was served, both

the administrator and the ranch manager resigned without so much as a goodbye to anyone at the ranch. I figured they wanted to sever all ties they had with Michael Jackson.

After the administrator resigned, she just disappeared.

No one could find her. I guessed that she didn't want to be called to testify before the grand jury. I wondered what information she could have given to the grand jury. Some of the employees who testified accused Michel of forcing them to lie to the grand jury. They eventually sued Michael; however, they lost their case. This group of employees had hoped to get lots of money from Michael, but they failed. In fact, the judge made the employees pay for all court costs.

ADDITIONAL SECURITY

Several months later, Michael took up permanent residence at Neverland Valley Ranch. He brought along the security team he used when on tour. To say the least, security at the ranch was chaotic. The security team that Michael brought used my security people in areas they were not trained for. When I refused to allow my officers to work with them, they became quite hostile.

Two of them asked to speak with me in private. Each was over six feet tall and tried to intimidate me with size and aggressiveness. They accused me of being disloyal to Michael. I tried to explain that my security officers were only trained in residential security, not in caravan security. It was like talking to a wall. I played their game until I felt it was time to leave. I finally turned around and left the room. Even after our discussion, they continued to use my

On one occasion, I received a phone call from a county firefighter who told me that he had been run off the road by Michael's caravan security team. On another occasion, I received word that Michael's security team had stopped a car that they felt was following them. They pulled the driver out of his car and beat him. They then got back into their vehicles and drove off. After dealing with Michael's other security team, I could only describe them as thugs. They felt they could do anything they wanted to do because they worked for Michael Jackson.

MY LAST DAY

On December 23, 1993, while checking the back of the main house, I slipped on some ice and landed on my tailbone. My back became very sore, and I had a hard time walking. I went to the business office to report my accident and told them I wanted to see a

doctor right away.

That was the last day I worked for Michael Jackson. I had an operation during the first week of January 1994. I was in the hospital for eleven days. No one from the ranch visited, called, or even sent a card; I wasn't surprised I didn't hear from Michael, just hurt. Due to the accident, the nerves in my body were damaged and would not work properly. To this day, the doctors still do not know what caused my acute neuropathy. I still have to walk with a walker, almost ten years later.

SUMMARY

What I observed while working at Neverland Valley Ranch would be classified as merely circumstantial evidence. However, circumstantial evidence has convicted many people. Of course, there is also the \$ 12 million that Michael paid to a child who accused him of child molestation. This is more circumstantial evidence to be considered. I find it very curious that Michael couldn't afford turkeys for his employee's families, but could pay out \$ 12 million to a family so they would drop the child molestation charges they filed with the Los Angeles Police Department. It is the same old story: Rich people can buy their way out of almost anything, I think that there is enough circumstantial evidence for the average person to

decide for himself if in fact a crime did occur. Also, keep in mind, we don't know if any other children complained about being molested or how many other children were paid to not file a complaint of child molestation.

I never gave evidence before the grand jury because the corporate office didn't want my testimony to be heard. I'm sure they were able to convince the Los Angeles Police Department that I was not physically able to appear at the hearing. This was a lie; they just didn't want my testimony given because it would hurt Michael Jackson. It took me so long to write this book because I signed a document when I was hired that stated I could not divulge any information or classified material about Michael Jackson, MJJ Productions, or Neverland Valley Ranch for five years from the date I severed my employment.

You'll have to decide for yourself if there was any wrongdoing on Michael Jackson's part. I have tried to be as honest and objective as I could in writing about my experiences on Michael's staff. I hope you enjoyed the book. And, as the old saying goes:

THE BEAT GOES ON !

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CNN TRANSCRIPT AMERICAN MORNING

Life at the Ranch

Aired November 28, 2003 - 07:15 ET

BILL HEMMER, CNN ANCHOR: Robert Wegner was head of security at Neverland Ranch for three years. He left the job about 10 years ago, wrote a book about it, in fact. The book is called "My Three Years Working for Michael Jackson."

Robert Wegner is live with us today from the state of Nevada. Good morning, sir. Nice to see you this morning, the day after Thanksgiving.

ROBERT WEGNER, FMR. HEAD OF SECURITY AT NEVERLAND RANCH: Good morning, Bill.

HEMMER: How often did you have contact with Michael Jackson in those three years?

WEGNER: Oh, maybe only a half a dozen times or so, but it was always strictly business. He wasn't much to chitchat with employees.

HEMMER: Would you say you were friends, or just an employee then?

WEGNER: Just an employee.

HEMMER: Six times in three years, doesn't strike me as a whole lot of contact.

WEGNER: No, well, remember, he's not always there

all the time either. I ran the security to protect his ranch, and him and his assets, when he's on tour and stuff. It was give and take.

HEMMER: Robert, one of the things you write in your book, I'll put it on the screen for our viewers to read along with us. You say, "I started to pay close attention to Michael when Michael was around children. It appeared that he always would stand close to them so their bodies would make contact." Seems a bit nebulous. Describe that to us, how you saw that contact.

WEGNER: Well, when I started seeing the numbers that were staying in his bedroom, I got suspicious and decided to start watching him closer, but anytime he was around the children, it would be a touching thing.

I'll give you another example. The electric carts that they go on because the ranch is big, so when they want to go to the zoo, or the park or theater, they get on electric carts. Whenever he would have a boy on the cart with him, his leg would always be touching the boy's leg and he would lay his hand on the boy's thigh. Now this wasn't just one time, this was every time he had a boy on the cart with him. The seat was wide enough you didn't have to make contact.

HEMMER: Is that against the law though, sir?

WEGNER: No, that's just improper, as far as I'm concerned. I never saw anything that was against the

law.

HEMMER: You never saw anything illegal in your three years? Nothing illegal?

WEGNER: No, I just saw improprieties that lead you up to circumstances, circumstantial evidence, and each one that I saw added more to it.

HEMMER: Robert, you mentioned in a few answers back there that you got concerned with the number of people in his bedroom. You say 100 children slept in his room that three-year period. How would you arrive at this number?

WEGNER: We had a chalk board in the security office. On that chalkboard was the sleeping arrangements of every place on the ranch. I would guess it was between 12 and 14 sleeping places. He has his own fire department. So it was up to security to put numbers in all those spots where people were sleeping so then we could give that to the fire department in case they had an emergency and had to evacuate.

HEMMER: Robert, you've contacted the D.A. in Santa Barbara County. They have not gotten back to you. Why do you think that is?

WEGNER: Well, I just -- if I had anything to help them with, I would. I may not have. So he may have enough of a case he doesn't have to go out looking.

HEMMER: You say you wrote the book to make sure kids are protected. You trying to make some money too, though, in this?

WEGNER: Oh, yes. You know, I wouldn't be telling the truth if I didn't say that was the case.

But I'll tell you something, if I had been able to go to the grand jury, there wouldn't have been a book. I got injured, and that's why I left the ranch. I fell on my back and hurt my back. I've been on a walker for 10 years now, totally permanently disabled, and they convinced LAPD that I could not come to the grand jury hearing. When I heard that there had been one, it was over. So if I had testified there, there wouldn't have been a book.

HEMMER: Robert Wegner, thanks for talking to us.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Robert Wegner was born in California and raised in the West Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, Culver City, and Westchester areas. He attended Richland Avenue Grammar School, Emerson Jr. High School, and University High School. He spent some time in the U.S. Army shortly after high school. A few years later, he attended Santa Monica City College, attaining an associate in arts degree in criminal justice. From there, he enrolled

